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Spring 2000

Logos-Sophia

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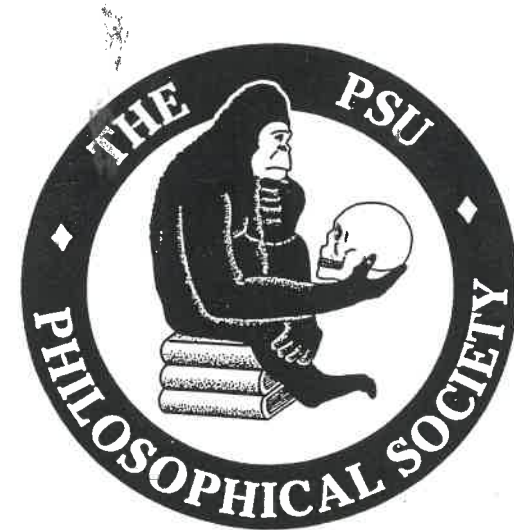
Logos-Sophia

Volume 10
Spring 2000



LOGOS-SOPHIA

**THE JOURNAL OF THE
PITTSBURGH STATE UNIVERSITY
PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY**



Logo designed by Todd Gimlin

**Volume 10
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Introduction

It's strange how the world works. Two years ago I knew very little about philosophy, and now here I am, an editor of the PSU Philosophical Journal and president of Philosophical Society. When I started going to the Philosophical Society meetings in the Fall of 1998, there were only two or three people; since Spring of 1999, there have been between five and seven consistently.

The Philosophical Society has been around since 1987, and in those thirteen years, there have been ups and downs. Dr. Viney, the Society's faculty advisor, has a memo in his office from 1991 or 1992, begging for funds to publish *Logos-Sophia*, because PSUPS was basically dead. Needless to say, it is not dead. In fact, it is growing. We now have a website (logossophia.freesevers.com) and an e-mail address (logossophia@yahoo.com).

During the past year, every Saturday at 5:00 PM students of PSUPS met at Coffee By the Book on 6th Street to conduct business and discuss various philosophical issues. The group read and discussed articles in *The Atlantic Monthly*, "What is the Koran?", "The Biological Basis of Morality" by E. O. Wilson, Brian Victoria's "Yasutani Roshi" in *Tricycle: The Buddhist Review*, the exchange of articles in the 1922 *New York Times* between William Jennings Bryan and Harry Emerson Fosdick on evolution and the Bible, and various articles out of Voltaire's *Philosophical Dictionary*. On one occasion in the Spring, members of PSUPS watched the film *The Matrix* and discussed its philosophical dimensions.

In keeping with PSUPS's tradition of encouraging philosophical activity outside the classroom, some members attended the Kansas City Area Philosophical Association Meeting on March 6th 1999. The Society also sponsored two public lectures. The first was "Celts, Kilts and Shamrocks," which I presented on March 17th 1999. The second was a talk on Thomas Kuhn's philosophy of science on December 2nd

1999 presented by Dr. Barry Brown of Missouri Southern State College.

The Society wishes to thank Micah Dillinger for his contribution to the cover art for this issue. The Society also wishes to thank Roger and Jan O'Connor, owners of Coffee By the Book, for providing a welcoming atmosphere for our weekly discussions.

If you never thought philosophy was your cup of tea (or coffee, as the case may be), I invite you to join us some Saturday at 5:00 at Coffee By the Book for a meeting. We always welcome new insights and ideas. And who knows? You might find yourself loving it.

Camilla North
PSU Philosophical Society, President

Satan's Character in the Old Testament

Tonya Thurman

Today's world has a preconceived idea of Satan with horns, tail and pitchfork. This is the predominate image of a powerful devil who is the enemy of the church; however it is vastly different from the figure of Satan that we find in the Old Testament. Early Judaism did not regard the world as having a dual nature, a concept that is generally accepted today. In many passages of the Bible it would seem early Jewish writers believed there was God, and everything else was not God; that is to say that there was no distinct image or personification of Satan or the Devil. A distinct change occurred in the Jewish concept of Satan after their Babylonian Captivity. After this period, Jewish priests began to see an ongoing struggle between God and evil (represented in Satan). A name often given to Satan is Lucifer, and this reference is found in a verse of Isaiah that some say is proof of the "Fall of Satan." Although it appears to be mentioning a Babylonian king, many theologians have come to believe it is symbolic of Satan's Fall from Heaven. This is the only reference to the downfall of Satan in the entire Old Testament, and it is vague and obscure.

The very name Satan comes from a Hebrew word meaning "adversary" or "accuser" (Smith 186). It is used to describe anyone who stands in the way of something or someone. Satan rarely appears as a distinctive figure in the Old Testament; although a notable exception is in Job. A satan, in the form of a common noun, can be used to tell any adversary, either human or supernatural. It is apparent that the idea of two powerful supernatural forces had not entered Jewish theology yet, and was not in their scripture (Tremmel 111). However, there were other supernatural "adversaries." A fine example of supernatural adversary is found in the

book of Job. At the onset of the plot, Satan tells God that Job would not bless the Lord if he was not prosperous (Job 1:11). In this case, Satan is a supernatural adversary whose role is that of accuser. However, the fact that Satan could come into the presence of God is contradictory to the contemporary beliefs that Satan can not exist where God abides. In modern thought, at least in some churches, we are told Satan only works here on earth and in hell.

In the King James Version of the Bible, there are others who are described as adversaries, but were not labeled Satan by the translators. There are many adversaries mentioned, as in 1 Samuel 29:4, that are not described by the word Satan. So one is left to wonder, why the translator used the term Satan in one instance, and adversary in another passage. In 1 Samuel 29:4, it is recorded that the Philistines labeled David as a potential adversary. One reason the translator probably choose not to use the term Satan in this instance, is probably because the potential adversary in question is clearly a human, and not of the supernatural. The connotation of the word "Satan" had become symbolic of the ruler of all evil about this time, therefore it would have been inappropriate to use it when describing a hero of the Old Testament. It might be that after the theology surrounding the concept of Satan changed, the scribes would take some license in the translation.

There are other problems with the figure of Satan, and one can observe how the Jewish view of evil changed over time. In the book of 2 Samuel chapter 24, we are told God instructs David to number the children of Israel, then grew angry and punished Israel for it by sending an angel that killed thousands with plague; however in 1 Chronicles Chapter 21, which retells the same event, Satan stands before David and tempts him to number Israel. A reader might question why God spoke to David in one passage, telling him to number Israel, but Satan is mentioned as saying it in the second instance in 1 Chronicles. (Gardner 385). When

looking for an explanation, it is best to trace the history of Israel during the several hundred year gap between the two books.(Tremmel 111). For what happened to the nation of Israel in that long time span was a cultural and religious upheaval that changed their outlook on the spiritual world.

Because the second account was written long after the first, the time period in which the books were written need to be looked at. The book of 1 Samuel is believed to have been written some time during the period of the divided monarchy. At this point in time, Jewish belief did not perceive the idea of a dualistic universe. They simply believed that God, and his angels, were the only supernatural forces in the world. All things originated from their God, even things that seemed evil. This statement is not made without scriptural evidence. In Isaiah 45:7, God states, "I make peace and create evil: I the Lord do these things." If the passage is taken literally, it would seem to indicate God is responsible for all that happens in the invisible spiritual world, good and bad. It also opens a new argument, questioning how God can be perfect and loving, and still create evil. However, this paper is too limited to get greatly involved in that debate.

With this in mind, there can be arguments as to why a loving God would work evil, or tempt man to perform evil. The explanation may be that God uses evil in order to assure a good end or make a judgment, such as hardening Pharaoh's heart in order to show "his signs and wonder in the land of Egypt" (Exodus 7:3). The Ten Plagues were God's judgment upon Egypt, but Moses was sent to warn pharaoh beforehand, that he would know God had done these things to him. It would seem God sent Moses, even though he knew, and in fact took an active role, in Pharaoh refusing to release the Hebrews. This raises a vast amount of philosophical questions that could be and have been almost endlessly debated.

At any rate, the Jewish view of Satan was drastically altered after their period of Babylonian captivity. Under foreign domination, they had been exposed to other religious influences as well as severe persecution (Gardner 386). They began to think of Satan as a ferocious ruler of a demonic empire on this earth. This view of evil is similar to that of the Persian religion of Zoroastrianism, except that Judaism does not give evil as much power as the Persians did (Schouweiler 24). This is because, although they recognized that good and evil were always at odds, they believed God would be victorious in the end, and was by far more powerful. The timing was right for a change in the way the Hebrews looked at their religion. They had been taken into a horrible captivity, and needed to explain why this was happening to them. So when the outside religions suggested to them there might be an "evil force" that worked against mankind, it was a decent explanation for their sufferings.

In light of this, it is conceivable that the author of 1 Chronicles, which was written some time after the Babylonian captivity, had a different interpretation of Satan and evil than the author of 1 Samuel. At this time, many began to attribute the destructive characteristics of God to a separate evil being, such as Satan (Schouweiler 20). The author of 1 Chronicles could have had some difficulty in believing that God would command David to number Israel then punish him for doing so (Gardner 385). So in response, he credited the temptation of David to what he believed to be the chief of all evil. This was how the Jewish people came to deal with the conflict over how God could work evil, and tempt people to do evil. Today, tempting a person to evil deeds is seen as Satan's works, and this is apparently where it began.

All this aside, there are still important questions that need to be answered about Satan, and how he came to exist as we know him. One such question deals with Lucifer, which is considered to be the name of Satan before the fall. It is a fact

that the name Lucifer is mentioned only one time in the Old Testament. The verse simply states, "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How are thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nation!" (Isaiah 14:12). Taken alone, it would appear reasonable that this refers to Satan's fall from Heaven; however, when one investigates and reads the entire chapter in which the verse is found, a different view is presented. This entire passage of scripture, from Isaiah 14:4 until 14:24, is a curse on a future king of Babylon. It does not appear to have anything at all to do with supernatural devils, or fallen angels. Furthermore, the name "Lucifer" seems to be a Latin word for a Hebrew word that literally meant "bright star, son of the dawn" (Tremmel 115). In fact, this "bright star" he refers to means Venus, because Lucifer is how the ancient world referred to the planet.

So how, one may ask, has this become a common reference for the supposed "downfall"? It may well be that the language and imagery used there seemed to be cosmic, and later writers and interpreters took liberties with the meaning. One such verse, Isaiah 14:13, says, "for thou hast said in thine heart I will ascend to heaven, I will exalt my throne above the star of God...." It is because of statements like this that many would contend, although it does not literally say it is talking about Satan, there is an indirect reference to him. So it is, since the time of Saint Jerome, this has been taken to be another name for Satan (Smith 186).

There is one other explanation for Isaiah's use of this type of language and meaning. It would seem to destroy the theory that this passage alludes to the "Fall of Satan." The message given is strikingly similar to one found in Babylonian Mythology. Gilgamesh, a legendary king, is told that the great kings are brought low in Ereshkigal's domain, the Babylonian underworld (Turner 51). Isaiah may have been using a concept of Babylonian hell to curse this future king of Babylon. We may never know exactly why he wrote

this passage the way he did, but the imagery is cosmic and controversial.

There are many who take for granted the presence of Satan in the Garden of Eden. In point of fact, the scene in Genesis merely mentions a serpent talking to Eve, and never refers to the creature as a form of the devil. In the same manner, writers of the New Testament seem to take for granted their readers would know Satan as the supreme enemy of God, and the author of all evil (Tremmell 114). This may be, in part, because they were using the intertestamental writings of First Enoch, Second Enoch, The Books of Adam and Eve, as the source for some of their beliefs. These books make it evident that some in the Jewish community held beliefs that differed from the strict Old Testament interpretation.

These books, were written between the Old and New Testament, and after they had been influenced by their Babylonian Captivity. They seem to demonstrate how the Jewish ideas about evil and Satan evolved. In The Books of Adam and Eve, it details a supplemental version of the Fall of Man (Tremmel 112). In this version, it is made clear that Satan himself was behind the serpent's temptation of Eve, and Satan goes as far as to explain himself. Satan reveals his jealousy of man, namely Adam, and his refusal to bow before God's new creation, specifically Adam. So his involvement in the first sin, was an act of revenge.

Second Enoch, was written later than The Books of Adam and Eve, and it gives yet another version of Satan's Fall. It pushes the date of Satan's rebellion back before the creation of man. This version gives the angel Satan the name "Satanail," and tells that he wanted to put his throne higher than God's own throne (Tremmel 114). It was because of this "sin of pride" that Satan was expelled from Heaven, and the Book of Second Enoch goes as far as to say there were various other angels that followed Satan and shared his fate (Tremmel 114). These versions, given in Second Enoch and

The Books of Adam and Eve, seems to be where most New Testament authors look for their ideas, since the Old Testament does not elaborate on such matters as "The Fall of Satan," or the temptation in the Garden of Eden.

However the concept of Satan came about, it is clear he has not always been thought of as the chief devil. The cartoon image of a red devil with horns, is vastly different from the beliefs of early Judaism. This change in thought is apparent in many passages of scripture, and it takes little effort to uncover the reason for this transformation. It is shocking to realize the story of "Satan's Fall" did not take place in the Old Testament; the basis for this event originates from far more modern literature, or from New Testament writings. Strictly speaking of the Old Testament, Satan is not much more than an accusing angel in the book of Job, and a simple adversary at other times.

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Some Thoughts on Anselm's Ontological Arguments

Mark Albert

Most ontological arguments for God's existence are based on the concept of God being infinite or necessary. The first claim is usually a statement of God's greatness—"God is that than which nothing greater can be conceived." The second major claim is that careful reflection reveals that God's existence follows from this definition.

Anselm gives two ontological arguments for the existence of God; both are in his book *Proslogion*. The first argument is as follows:

1. God is the greatest conceivable being.
2. The idea of God exists in the mind.
3. It is greater to exist in reality and in the mind than in the mind alone.
4. Therefore, God must exist in reality.

To criticize the argument, Guanilo, a fellow theist, used the form of Anselm's reasoning to prove that a perfect island exists. In other words, Guanilo had the concept of the perfect island, and because it is better to exist in reality and in the mind than to exist in the mind alone, his perfect island would have to exist. This shows a flaw in the form of Anselm's argument as no such island has been found, unfortunately.

Another analogy to show a flaw in Anselm's argument involves the opposite use of "greater."

1. A vacuum is that than which nothing lesser can be conceived.
2. The idea of the vacuum exists in the mind.
3. It is lesser to exist in the mind alone than in the mind and in reality.
4. Therefore, a vacuum cannot exist in reality.

If one understands “greater” or “lesser” as implying propositions about what exists, and then illogically considers existence a property, the placement of vacuum in a form of this argument leads to a false conclusion. Vacuums exist in such places as the spaces between particles and waves. In any event, one should not be able to prove the non-existence of a vacuum with an *a priori* argument.

* * *

Most criticisms of Anselm’s argument involve either attacking the premises (1-3) or the form of the argument. Let us look at each of the premises.

(1) There is some ambiguity as to what is “greater.” Is a benevolent God “greater” than an indifferent God? Is Hydrox “greater” than Oreo? Is virtual reality “greater” than reality? Does the “greater” involve values of morality, taste, or game playing? The definition of God appears quite vague and requires a more concrete definition before it is used in a logical argument.

(2) There is some debate as to whether or not the idea of God truly can exist in the mind. For instance, can the greatest being be understood by a mind which is limited by the brain that embodies it? In Anselm’s defense, in order for a person to speak against God’s existence, he or she must have a concept of God that exists in the mind. However, if the definition of God as stated in the first premise is ambiguous, then not only do those who argue against God’s existence not have the idea of God in mind, the theists would not have the proper “idea of God” either.

(3) Both Charles Hartshorne and Norman Malcolm, who accept versions of the ontological argument, disagree with the third premise. Modern logic can now better deal with questions which involve existence. For instance, to state that a unicorn is white is false, because unicorns do not exist. One cannot ascribe properties to a being that does not

exist—existence is not a property. Modern logic classifies necessity and existence as quantifiers rather than properties or predicates. Not only are existence and predicates different, but speaking about the properties of a non-existent object (such as a unicorn) is impossible since existence is a prerequisite for the instantiation of properties.

* * *

The flaw in Anselm’s argument may be attributed to an equivocation between the “idea of God” and “God.” Premise 1 refers to God while premise 2 refers to the idea of God. For the argument to validly conclude with statement 4, premise 3 would have to be reworded to remove this equivocation.

3’. It is greater for a thing to exist in reality and its idea in the mind than for its idea to exist in the mind alone.

Of course, now “greater” includes comparing more than one thing, which raises the question, “How can two things be greater than one?” Not only does this bring about the criticisms of premise 1, but it also shows that one must define the relation of “greater than” for properties in a single being as well as for purposes of comparison among different beings.

* * *

Anselm’s second ontological argument can be outlined:

1. God is the greatest conceivable being.
2. God either necessarily exists, possibly exists (or not exist), or necessarily does not exist.
3. A necessarily existing being is greater than a contingent being.
4. Therefore God must exist, necessarily.

One of the major revisions in this argument is the removal of the equivocation between "God" and "idea of God." God's necessity or possibility of existence depends upon whether or not God's essence includes existence. The strongest criticisms against this argument are directed at the first premise. Not only is "greater" ill defined, but one may also claim that this definition is self-contradictory. One may claim that this definition of God is similar to the definition of the greatest number, a concept that contradicts itself. The greatest number cannot be the greatest number since something can always be added to it.

* * *

Supposing these objections can be met, one may still wonder what all of this tells us about God. Even if God's existence were proven, what other properties follow from this? This question not only plagues ontological arguments, but also revelation as well as other theistic arguments like the teleological and the cosmological. Thus, even if theists manage to prove that God exists, they have not necessarily proved what properties God has.

The Significance of the Squirrel in Religion

For Rev. Sara Dillinger and the Buffalo United Methodist Church

Squirrel got into the church basement.
All through the service
Thump, crash.
Wrecked the Christmas tree.

A couple days later they tried to catch it.
Little old ladies chasing it,
Shooing it to the menfolk.
Squirrel got away.

Mascot, maybe?
Everybody laughs.

So, what is
The significance of the squirrel in religion?
A symbol of the human condition:
We're all a little squirrely.

Camilla North

Five French Poems by Camilla North

(The French original appears with an English translation on the facing page)

Un paradox

Est-ce que la prophétie est vrai
Parce que le prophète connaît le futur
Ou parce que le prophète fait le futur?

Changer

Tout change;
Tout reste le même.
Nous mourons
Et nous naissons
Peu à peu à chaque moment
L'homme à cinq ans
N'est pas l'homme à cinquante ans.

Je ne suis pas
La personne que j'étais
Ce matin.

A paradox

Is the prophecy true
Because the prophet knows the future
Or because the prophet makes the future?

Changing

Everything changes;
Everything stays the same.
We die
And we are born
Little by little every moment.
The man at five
Is not the same man at fifty.

I am not
The person I was
This morning.

L'homme est une chose variable

Quand les vents de l'été finissent,
Nous voulons leur chaleur.

Quand les feuilles de l'automne tombent,
Nous voulons leurs belles couleurs.

Quand les neiges de l'hiver fondent,
Nous voulons leur grandeur.

Quand les fleurs du printemps flétrissent,
Nous voulons leurs parfums.

Mais, quand les vents de l'été soufflent,
Ils sont trop chaud.

Quand les feuilles de l'automne sont dans les arbres,
Elles font tant de bruit dans le vent.

Quand les neiges de l'hiver couvrent les arbres
Elles sont trop froids.

Quand les fleurs de printemps croissent,
Elles mettent des pollens dans l'air.

Nous ne sommes jamais heureux.

Man is a variable thing

When the summer winds are gone,
We want their warmth.

When the autumn leaves fall,
We want their beautiful colors.

When the winter snow melts,
We want its grandeur.

When the spring flowers wilt,
We want their perfume.

But when the summer winds blow,
They are too hot.

When the autumn leaves are on the trees,
They make so much noise in the wind.

When the winter snows cover the trees,
They are too cold.

When the spring flowers bloom,
They fill the air with pollen.

We are never happy.

“Que sais je?”

Pour Michel de Montaigne, l'originateur de l'essai

Que sais je?

Je sais que le ciel est bleu.
Mais les hommes de science me disent
Que le ciel n'est pas bleu.
C'est une illusion.

Je sais que le soleil se lève et se couche.
Mais c'est une illusion aussi.

Je sais que j'existe.
Mais puis-je le prouver?

Tout j'ai pensé savoir,
Je ne sais pas.

Alors, que savez-vous?

“What Know I?”

For Michel de Montaigne, the originator of the essay

What know I?

I know the sky is blue.
But scientists tell me
It is not blue.
It is an illusion.

I know the sun rises and sets.
But this is an illusion, too.

I know I exist.
But how can I prove it?

All I thought I knew,
I don't know.

So, what know you?

Que Je Sais

Je veux ouvrir vos yeux
À les merveilles de la vie.
Je veux ouvrir vos esprits
À la sagesse de l'enfant
Qui voit la beauté des tout
étonné à chaque jour nouvelle.

Alors, que sais-je?
La question n'est pas si le monde existe,
Ou si nous existons.
C'est comment nous vivons.
Il y a une différence entre exister et vivre.

What I Know

I want to open your eyes
To the wonders of life.
I want to open your spirits
To the wisdom of the child
Who sees beauty in everything
And is amazed at each new day.

So, what do I know?
The question is not if the world exists,
Or if we exist.
It's how we live.
There is a difference between exiting and living.

Fresh Beauty

Fresh beauty is
Light, cold rain
On grey gravel driveways.
Some stones white with dust,
Others water blackened.
And splotched drops
On old, greyed, wooden mailboxes
Surrounded by grass-green weeds
And skies the color of blue jeans.
As thunder whispers
And wind caresses.

Kathryn Lookadoo

Dreams

Drifting in a cool white sea of sheets
My legs are wrapped in waves of linen,
And a riptide of pillows
Pulls me into dreams.

Kathryn Lookadoo



Jules Lequyer (1814-1862)
by Michelle Bakay

The Principle Points of Jules Lequyer

Donald Wayne Viney

In 1898 George Séailles published, in *La Revue Philosophique de La France et de l'Étranger*, an excellent article titled, "Un Philosophe inconnue, Jules Lequyer" [An Unknown Philosopher, Jules Lequyer].¹ This "unknown philosopher" was considered by William James (1846-1910) to be a "French philosopher of genius" (James 1981, vol. 1176). Charles Renouvier (1815-1903), until the end of his life, considered Lequyer his "master in philosophy" (Renouvier 1912, 371; 1930, 64; Perry, 663). Despite these recommendations, and despite the publication of several articles and books, including his *Oeuvres complètes* [Complete works], the name of Lequyer remains unknown among many philosophers, particularly English speaking philosophers. For example, one may regret that the ninth volume of *A History of Philosophy* (1977), by Frederick Copleston, devoted entirely to French philosophy since the Revolution, makes no mention of Lequyer.

This regrettable ignorance may be only due to the facts that Lequyer himself published nothing and that his works were not translated into English until recently (Lequyer 1998; Lequyer 1999). This very ignorance moves us to emphasize his genius more than a century after his death so as to prevent his falling into obscurity.

Chronology of Jules Lequyer

The first biography of Lequyer was that of Prosper Hémon (1846-1918) but he died before having finished it. Thanks to the careful work of Gérard Pyguillem, this biography was published in 1991 (Hémon, 109-235). Louis Dugas also gave us a summary of the life of Lequyer based

¹ The official spelling of the name of the philosopher is "Lequyer" although many authors prefer "Lequier."

on the work of Hémon (Dugas 1924, 3-52). Finally, I have written a biography of Lequyer, recently published (Lequyer 1999, 107-190). The following chronology is based on that of Jean Grenier in his edition of Lequyer's complete works. I have clarified certain details and added some information.

- 1814: Birth of Joseph-Louis-Jules Lequyer on January 29th at Quintin (in Brittany). Son of Joseph-Jean-Noel Lequyer and of Céleste-Reine-Marie-Eusèbe Digaultray.
- 1834: Enters the École Polytechnique in Paris; Lequyer's father officially changed the spelling of the name of his son from "Lequier" to "Lequyer" (Grenier, 257-58).
- 1837: Death of Lequyer's father (1838 according to Séailles; Dugas says 1839).
- 1838: Resignation from the École Polytechnique where Lequyer had met Renouvier.
- 1839: Settles at Plérin (Brittany), near Saint-Brieuc.
- 1843: Settles in Paris and teaches at the École Égyptienne; translation into French of the autobiography of Sir Humphrey Davy.
- 1844: Death of Lequyer's mother; before dying his mother said to their devoted servant, Marianne Feuillet (who had helped raise Lequyer), "Oh, Marianne, pray, look out for my poor Jules. He has in his heart a passion which, I greatly fear, will be the death of him." (Hémon, 172). She was correct.
- 1846: Mystical crisis; Lequyer writes to Mgr. Épivent, "God spoke to me . . ." (Hémon, 186).
- 1848: Return to Plérin and candidacy to the North Coast Assembly; he was not elected.
- 1850: Sells the family house at Saint-Brieuc.
- 1851: February 28th, mental crisis where Lequyer tried to cut his arm off with a hatchet (Hémon, 199); confinement at Dinan then at Passy near Paris from

the 12th to the 19th of April under the care of Dr. Blanche.

- 1851: After recovering his health, Lequyer asks Mlle Nanine Deszille's hand in marriage. Lequyer and Nanine had been friends since childhood. They were never married.
- 1853: Teaches at Lons-le-Saulnier and at Besançon.
- 1855: Return to Plérin.
- 1860: Candidacy for the archivist's position of the Côtes-du-Nord.
- 1861: Lequyer again proposes to Mlle Deszille.
- 1862: February 11th, death by drowning in the bay of St.-Brieuc. According to Louis Prat, one of his friends, Lequyer made a supreme wager in which he was asking God to save his genius. Louis Le Hesnan, a young man who was with Lequyer on the beach when the philosopher threw himself in the water, says that his last words were, "Adieu Nanine" (Hémon, 232).
- 1865: Renouvier underwrote 120 copies of a selection of Lequyer's manuscripts under the title *La Recherche d'une première vérité, fragments posthumes* [The Search for a First Truth, Posthumous Fragments].
- 1868: Renouvier and Madame Agathe Lando erected a monument with a statue on top of it over the grave of Lequyer at Plérin. The inscription reads: "This monument was raised to the memory of an unhappy friend and a man of great genius in 1868 by Renouvier. Jules Lequyer, born at Quintin in 1814. Deceased at Plérin in 1862. Pray for him. His works: "The Hornbeam Leaf," *Abel and Abel*, *The Search for a First Truth*, *The Dialogue of the Predestinate and the Reprobate*.

Lequyer's Thought

The philosophy of Lequyer is difficult to classify. Is it existentialist? Jean Wahl, who published extracts of Lequyer's writing (Wahl 1948), highlighted certain "curious

analogies" between Lequyer and his contemporary Søren Kierkegaard (1813-1855) (Wahl 1967, 430-432), although the two did not know of each other. It is true that there are elements in his thought that are reminiscent of Kierkegaard. But there are also substantial differences between the two (Viney 1987; Lequier 1993, vii).

Albert Camus (1913-1960), thanks to his teacher, Jean Grenier, knew Lequyer's works, but he was not influenced by the Breton (Dobrenn 26, 61, 64, 66, 114, 168, 170). In his published writings he said only that the death of Lequyer was mysterious (Camus, 20). According to Jean Wahl, Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-1980) borrowed the slogan, "To make, and in making, to make oneself" from Lequyer (Wahl 1949, 32-33), however we have not been able to verify this.

One may also argue that there are elements in the philosophy of Lequyer of what is called process philosophy as one finds in Henri Bergson (1859-1941), William James, Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1948), and Charles Hartshorne (b. 1897). What is important, according to these philosophers, is the dynamic character of existence, becoming rather than being. Hartshorne, one of the greatest living American philosophers, often mentions Lequyer in his writings (it was Hartshorne who familiarized me with the name of Lequyer). Harvey Brimmer, a student of Hartshorne, wrote a remarkable dissertation titled *Jules Lequier and Process Philosophy* (1975).

These terms (existentialism and "process philosophy") are anachronistic and they do not do justice to the thought of the Breton philosopher. The most certain thing one may say is that Lequyer is a precursor of these movements without being completely explained by their principles and without belonging to them entirely.

Let us highlight the essentials of the thought of Jules Lequyer. Jean Grenier, the greatest French interpreter of Lequyer and the editor of his works, has justly said that the philosophy of Lequyer "is only a serious meditation on the

word *create*" (Grenier, 210). Let us consider one of the first childhood memories of Lequyer, recorded in the narrative, "The Hornbeam Leaf": In his father's garden, at the moment of taking a leaf from a hornbeam tree, the young Lequyer was seized by the thought that he was the "absolute master" of his action. He believed that he had the power to do or not to do the action; each course of action was equally in his power. Moreover, by his choice to take or not to take the leaf, insignificant though it be, he would have changed forever this little corner of the world. Henceforth eternally, the garden would be a little different due to his choice.

However, the young Lequyer contemplated for a moment the idea that this feeling of freedom—what he elsewhere calls "a presentiment of freedom" (Lequier 1952, 52-53)—is only an illusion. Perhaps, he thought, one is only a link in a chain of cause and effect extending into the abyss of the past. Can one believe in freedom and escape the necessity of causes and effects only by the false security of ignorance? According to Lequyer, one is not truly free if one is not the source of one's own actions, if these actions had been completely determined by the past. In this case, the feeling that one has the power to do or not to do the action is only a dream of alternate futures. The future is preordained and the history of our choices, free though they seem to us, is already written. On the other hand, if freedom is a reality, the thought of determinism is only a chimera.

Because of these reflections, it is no longer simply a question of whether or not to take the leaf. It is a question of a forced choice between two ideas, freedom and necessity. From this definitive moment in his childhood, Lequyer recoiled at the thought of necessity. He wrote that, in his father's garden, after he had been fascinated by the shadows of determinism, he seized again his faith in his freedom by his freedom itself (Lequier 1952, 17). Here is the idea that one finds in the works of Renouvier and also in the writings of James. At a pivotal point in his life, James wrote, "My

first act of free will shall be to believe in free will" (James 1920, 147).

In his mature thought, incomplete though it is due to his tragic death by drowning at the age of forty-eight, Lequyer defended the rationality of this belief in free will, considered as a type of creation. He drew out the implications of this idea in the consideration of many questions of morality and metaphysics. In the words of Xavier Tilliette, "With unequaled force, Lequyer drew out all of the moral and theological consequences of the postulate of freedom" (Tilliette, 13). Following are five central points of Lequyer's writing concerning freedom:

(1) Human freedom does not concern simply acting according to the will, as Saint Augustine (354-430) claimed. However, Lequyer does not deny that we are free in this sense. He wrote, "That my will determines itself without constraint cannot be doubted: the interior feeling guarantees it in me" (Lequyer 1952, 50). But, it is also necessary that the will itself be free from causes that absolutely determine their effects. Again, Lequyer says, "if it is a question of a free action, we know that is really possible not to do it" (Lequyer 1952, 192). If it is really possible not to do it, then, more than one future is possible, being given the same agent with the same past. As Lequyer said, "one must choose either the reality of free will with ambiguous futures, or the appearance of free will with infallible futures" (Lequyer 1952, 75).

(2) Free acts are creators. They are creators of the world, adding new determinations to what exists. But free acts are also acts of the creation of self. This is not to say that one can create one's own existence. Nevertheless, insofar as free acts are creators, they add new determinations in the agent him or herself. Lequyer writes,

I am free; beyond my dependence I am independent, and dependent beyond my independence; I am a dependent independence; I am a person responsible to me who is

my own work, to God who created me creator of myself (Lequyer 1952, 70).

One is not responsible for the fact that one began to exist, but one should take responsibility for what one becomes. For Lequyer, "to act is to begin" (Lequyer 1952, 43).

(3) Lequyer realized that belief in free will is at once liberating and terrifying—and here is the existentialist element in Lequyer's thought. More than once Lequyer called determinism a nightmare. On the other hand, one should, if one is free, take responsibility for what one does, although one's actions issue in effects that one could not have predicted. In the garden of his father, Lequyer took the hornbeam leaf and, as a consequence, a bird was frightened, and he was seized in mid air by a sparrow hawk (Lequyer 1952, 14). Lequyer said that we cannot be indifferent in thinking of the possible consequences of our choices. He wrote to a friend, "To will is always to will always with audacity, with passion" (Hémon, 156).

(4) Belief in free will is not decided by empirical evidence. With Immanuel Kant, (1724-1804), Lequyer believed that morality presupposes free will. But whereas Kant believed that the empirical sciences presuppose determinism, Lequyer argued that the activity of science, in as much as its goal is a search for truth, presupposes free will. One freely chooses to search for truth, and one supposes that one's errors of judgment are avoidable. The laws of nature permit the discovery of truth; but they guarantee neither truth nor error.

How does one arrive at belief in freedom or necessity according to Lequyer? In the last part of his work, *The Search for a First Truth*, he writes, "it is an act of freedom that affirms freedom" (Lequyer 1952, 67). Here is the idea that so forcefully impressed Renouvier and James. "Two Hypotheses: freedom or necessity. To choose *between one and the other with one or with the other*" (Lequyer 1952, 70). One is free, or one is not free; one believes or one does not

believe in free will. Thus, one has four possibilities (Lequier 1952, 398):

either Freedom is
or Necessity is

Freedom with the Idea of Freedom

Freedom with the Idea of Necessity

Necessity with the Idea of Freedom

Necessity with the Idea of Necessity.

Renouvier called this idea the double dilemma, or "Lequyer's dilemma" (Renouvier 1912, 138). Renouvier presented the dilemma thus: "Necessity affirmed necessarily; Necessity affirmed freely; Freedom affirmed necessarily; Freedom affirmed freely" (Renouvier 1912, 138). According to Lequyer and Renouvier, only the last possibility makes possible the moral life and the search for truth—that is to say, the activity of science. This is why freedom is, for Lequyer, *the first truth*.

(5) With remorseless logic, Lequyer followed the theological implications of his ideas of freedom. It is evident that if we are part creators of ourselves, and if God created us, God created us capable of creating ourselves. As we have seen, Lequyer speaks of a "God who created me creator of myself." Moreover, if these ideas are true, one cannot avoid the conclusion that God is not immutable, contrary to the authority of Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), who said, in the language of the ancient and medieval philosophers, that God is *pure act* (*actus purus*). For Lequyer, human acts of creativity create something (if only the divine knowledge of the choices) in God.

Lequyer reasoned that free will "suffices to deprive God of the integrity of all encompassing being." He continues,

It makes a spot in the absolute, which destroys the absolute. This universe, compared to immensity, is only, I concede, a grain of sand; but this grain of sand has its own kind of existence, and the changes that occur in it, not having less reality than the things that change, God,

who sees these things change, changes also in beholding them, or else he does not notice that they change (Lequier 1952, 74).

Of course, God notices them, or else he is not omniscient. The equation is exact: human freedom plus divine omniscience equals changes in God.

Naturally, the classical theologians object to these thoughts. They reason like this: If God changes, God has a future; but this is not possible unless God is ignorant of things to come. After all, it was Lequyer who said, "man deliberates and God waits" (Lequier 1952, 71). A God who never changes has no need to wait on human deliberations.

Lequyer responded that this argument betrays erroneous conceptions of the relations among free will, the future, and omniscience. If the creatures, in making their decisions, add new determinations to the world, then, insofar as their free choices are concerned, the future exists only as an ambiguity of possibilities. God, being omniscient, should know all things in their proper nature. Since the future of free decisions is not completely determinate, God knows these decisions in their incomplete state. On the other hand, if, as the classical theologians have it, God knows them as completely determinate, one is obliged to say that God is mistaken.

Lequyer turned the objection in his favor. God, as Lequyer conceives him, is not ignorant; but God, as the classical theologians conceive him, is in error concerning the future. The classical theologians do not take account of a reality that Lequyer affirms, "to know that God knows that such and such a man is at present undecided between two paths, and that neither the one nor the other is absolutely future, but that each of them is conditionally, imperfectly future" (Lequier 1952, 205).

In the final analysis, Lequyer's bold declarations are attempts to preserve both a robust concept of human freedom

and the majesty of God. Here is one way he summarized his thought:

The All-Powerful, the divine poet, in no way brings about the appearance on the world scene of characters who come to fill a role decided for them in advance—these imitations of life are the games of human genius. Who could make the work of God so frivolous and so base an idea! God made man free and capable himself of resisting even him. When he acts on us, he has said, it is with a great respect (Lequier 1952, 212).

According to Lequier, the classical theologians, intent on insuring God's majesty, unwittingly destroyed the basis upon which a person's decisions can be called his or her own. Lequier sought to restore human freedom without impugning God's perfection. He accomplished this with the concept of the Creator who creates other, lesser, creators.

Conclusion

There are many other aspects of the thought of Lequier that we could highlight. What André Clair said concerning the brief narrative "The Hornbeam Leaf" can be generalized to characterize all of Lequier's writings, "Every reader is struck by the freshness of the narrative and at the same time by the dramatic tension and its profundity" (Lequier 1993, vi-vii). Doctor Paul Houillon asks if we exaggerate in suggesting that Lequier "is the greatest French philosopher of the nineteenth century" (Houillon, 10). The judgment is difficult to make since Lequier is so unknown. But, perhaps we have demonstrated the truth of the words of Jean Wahl who observed that Lequier left "in the philosophical sky brief and vivid traces" (Wahl 1948, 12).

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Philosophy of Early Irish Saints

Camilla North

Recently there has been a resurgence of interest in Celtic and Irish spirituality. Spawned by best-seller *How the Irish Saved Civilization* and sustained by a variety of authors, this resurgence of interest focuses largely on the early Irish church and Irish saints. While much has been made of the saints' spiritual lives, very little has been done concerning their philosophy. This paper will look at characteristics of early Irish religious writings and the philosophy.

On reading early Irish religious writings, the first thing one notices is their wit and humor. One of the best examples of Irish wit is a story, from *Bethu Phátraic*, a life of St. Patrick, in which the saint bargains with God and wins (Carey 160-161). It can also be seen in stories told about the saints. One of the pre-eminent religious philosophers of Ireland was John Scotus Eriugena, born around 810. Apparently, he had a vicious sense of humor. At a dinner with the Roman emperor, the emperor asked him, "What separates a fool from an Irishman?" (*Quid distat inter sotum et Scottum?*). To which Eriugena replied, "Only the table." Legend has it that his students stabbed Eriugena to death with their pens (Cahill 208).

Another thing one notices is that the authors use the language (Irish in most cases, Latin in some) almost playfully. In *Féilire Oengusso* ("Martyrology of Oengus"), a calendar of saints' days from the ninth century (Carey 278), the author alliterates the last word of each stanza with the first word of the next. Such aids were necessary in a time when very few people were literate and it was memorization that preserved many texts until they could be written down.

Like St. Anselm's philosophical prayer, philosophy in early Irish writings is couched in sermons and prayers and, in the case of *The Voyage of St. Brendan*, epics reminiscent of

pre-Christian legends. The exception is Eriugena's *De Divisione Naturae*. Such frameworks were necessary because these were religious writers; to be blatantly philosophical was bordering on heresy. Indeed, Eriugena's works were ordered burned in 1225 by Pope Honorius II, probably because they smacked too much of pantheism and Platonism (Cahill 209-210).

The early Irish religious writers had elaborate cosmologies. Heaven and hell are described in great detail in such works as *Fís Adomnáin* (The Vision of Adomnán) and *In Tenga Bithnua* (The Ever-New Tongue), both of which take the form of sermons. According to the *Fís*, there are several areas of Hell, which encompass every discomfort man can feel: extreme heat, extreme cold, vicious beasts, and demons with scourges. The author takes great pains to describe who undergoes what punishment and why. For instance, those who have killed their kin and those who have "devastated God's church" (Carey 270) (i.e. greedy superiors of religious communities) are chained to pillars of fire by chains of fire, surrounded by a wall of fire to their chin. The *Fís'* vision of hell would offer a strong deterrent to those who heard it, rather like today's hellfire-and-damnation sermons, except more effective in that it first presents a lovely vision of heaven.

In Tenga Bithnua doesn't describe hell in quite as much detail as the *Fís*, but the detail it provides is vivid indeed. It is a valley, so deep that "even though the bird which is swiftest and strongest in flight should set out, it would scarcely reach its bottom at the end of a thousand years" (Carey 91). It is filled with beasts to maul the souls. The torment of the souls is such that they cannot even speak the name of God (Carey 91). The fire, cold, darkness, stench, hunger and thirst, fear, and melancholy in Hell are so great that if they touched the world, the world would be destroyed. *In Tenga's* Hell is more like the Hell we often think of.

In Tenga also gives a detailed account of creation, taking the Biblical account and elaborating and expanding on it. The author describes in great detail everything that was created on each day. The account is filled with legendary springs, rivers, seas, stones, and birds that recall pre-Christian ideas of the world.

In Tenga also offers an answer to that question occasionally posed. What existed before creation? The Ever-new Tongue answers, "God without beginning, without end, without sorrow, without age, without decay" (Carey 80). The Ever-new Tongue goes on to say that there was no time when God did not exist. He likens God to a thought that had no beginning.

Such difficult questions seem to have intrigued the Irish religious writers, for another, known as Augustinus Hibernicus, tries to reconcile miracles of the Bible with what he knows of science in *On Miracles of the Holy Scripture*. In Chapter 16, Augustinus takes on the burning bush in Exodus. He offers several explanations as to why the bush is not consumed by the fire. He says perhaps it is like a wood described in Saint Jerome's work, which is not consumed in burning (the "wood" is thought to actually be a mineral such as asbestos). Or perhaps, Augustinus says, the fire is not an earthly fire, but an incorporeal fire (Carey 57).

A similar explanation is used in *The Voyage of Saint Brendan*, when the candles on the Island of the Community of Ailbe are lit without burning (O'Meara 32). Philosophy rears her head suprisingly here, when St. Brendan asks, "How can an incorporeal light burn corporeally in a corporeal creature?" An elder of the community seems alarmed by this apparent questioning of God's power and chides the saint when he responds to Brendan, "Have you not read of the bush burning at Mount Sinai?" (O'Meara 32).

Elsewhere, as in Augustinus Hibernicus, philosophy, or more specifically the search for truth, is given a more prominent place. *Aipgitir Chrábaid* (The Alphabet of

Devotion), attributed to the nephew of St. Colum Cille (Columba) and thus one of the oldest documents in Irish (Carey 231), devotes an entire section to knowing the truth. The Alphabet is written as a sort of instruction manual for the Irish monastic community, although much of its teachings can apply to any Christian. The section on truth deals largely with what allows one to find truth and what hinders one. Truth is hidden from those who despise it and revealed to those who fulfill it. Truth is covered up by love, fear, indulgence, and poverty. An unrighteous person cannot properly proclaim the truth. Anger and "lukewarmness" are to be guarded against in searching for truth. Once one finds the truth, it should be proclaimed with humility and without indulgence. It should be spoken without bitterness, without indulgence, with patience, and with gentleness (Carey 237-238).

All the early Irish religious writings convey a sense of grace and great faith. Oftentimes the language is poetic, even where the medium is prose. Philosophy is subtly woven throughout, cropping up in delightful little flashes, such as those in Augustinus Hibernicus and *The Voyage of Saint Brendan*. For those who have the patience to closely read the works, it will be an interesting and enlightening look at this much-ignored period in the history of the Church.

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A Note on the Contributors

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Michelle Bakay is an artist living in Fort Collins, Colorado. Her rendition of Lequyer is based on photographs taken by Donald Viney of the statue that stands over Lequyer's grave in Plérin, France.

Donald Wayne Viney has been a professor of philosophy at PSU since 1984. He is faculty advisor to PSUPS. In 1998 and 1999 he published two books with the Edwin Mellen Press with translations of the works of Jules Lequyer. The paper published here is a translation of a (somewhat revised version) of "Les Thèses Principales de Jules Lequyer," originally presented in 1994 in Quintin, France, Lequyer's birthplace.